

# Circuit of the Earth Record Attempt

*New Zealand Pilot Plans to Fly 26,000 Miles in 11½ Days in a Proctor*

TO secure an official round-the-world record, that is, one recognized by the international organization, the F.A.I., it is necessary to conform to certain simple regulations including one that the overall average speed, making no allowance for time on the ground, must exceed 100 km/hr. Although several time records for flights round the world have been set up none of these has received official recognition. The route laid down for an official record flight includes observed stops at London, New York, San Francisco, Tokyo and Karachi and it is along a track passing through these key points that Capt. A. A. Mansfield, a young New Zealand pilot, is due to set out from Blackbushe today, April 15th, in an attempt to be the first to capture this record. Capt. Mansfield will use an ex-R.A.F. Percival Proctor III with D.H. Gipsy Six engine which has been converted to civil use and fitted with special long-range tanks, giving it a range of about 1,200 miles, by Field Aircraft Services, Ltd. Murphy V.H.F. radio has been fitted.

The shortest official distance round the world would be 19,396 miles, but in view of the range and height limitations of such a light aircraft it will be necessary for Capt. Mansfield to make detours extending this distance to approximately 25,826 miles. The Royal Aero Club has undertaken arrangements with all national aero clubs at essential checking points *en route* so that observers shall be present when the Proctor passes through.

In the course of this attempt it may be possible to establish several official point-to-point records, the particular ones aimed at being London-Montreal, London-New York, Tokyo-Paris, Karachi-London, and possibly a Tokyo-London record.

Arrangements for the supply of fuel and food have been made through Esso (Anglo-American Oil Co., Ltd.) and J. Lyons, Ltd., and an emergency ration package of the type supplied

to the Services during the war, costing approximately 27s 6d and weighing 16 lb will be carried.

Some idea of the physical endurance needed for this attempt may be gained from the fact that Capt. Mansfield plans to spend only six hours out of each 24 on the ground, of which four hours will be for sleeping. He hopes that if the flight progresses favourably he may be able to extend this rest period, but there is also the possibility that to achieve the objective it may have to be reduced during the final stages.

To attempt such a flight solo and in a light aircraft may seem to some people adventurous to the point of being foolhardy. However, Capt. Mansfield has quite exceptional experience of flying, and more particularly of operation over the greater part of his round-the-world route, and his record attempt, which is no sudden overnight idea, must be regarded as following on the tradition of the many British pioneers who before the war brought credit to themselves, their aircraft and this country by flying to the most distant points of the earth on similar types of aircraft, several, in fact, which were the forerunners of the Proctor, made by the same company.

The longest over-water flight will be 1,196 miles from Attu, in the Aleutian Isles, to Nemuro, Japan, but this will not be flown as a straight leg, the course being bowed to the North to follow the line of the islands as far as possible. The prevailing winds over the entire route have been carefully studied and advantage will be taken of them wherever this can be done. Capt. Mansfield is familiar with most of the route from his extensive experience as an R.A.F. and commercial pilot. The only stretch which is new to him is the Atlantic crossing. He prefers to make a considerable deviation on the leg from Bangkok to Rangoon, flying via Singapore rather than the more direct route over the mountains.

## R.Ae.S.—MEDALS AND AWARDS

THE Council of the Royal Aeronautical Society have awarded the following medals which will be presented at the Wilbur Wright Lecture to be held on May 27th. The Gold Medal, the Society's highest honour, has been awarded to Sir Bennett Melvill Jones, C.B.E., A.F.C., F.R.S., Hon. F.I.Ae.S., F.R.Ae.S., for his outstanding work in aerodynamics. The Silver Medal has been awarded to I. I. Sikorsky for helicopter development, and the Bronze Medal to Miss F. B. Bradfield, O.B.E., M.A., F.R.Ae.S., for her work on aeronautical research. To Sir William T. Griffith, D.Sc., F.R.I.C., F.Inst.P., F.I.M., goes the Simms Gold Medal for his Paper on high-temperature alloys for gas turbines. The George Taylor (of Australia) Medal has been awarded to Dr. J. W. Drinkwater, D.Sc., Wh.Sc., and W. G. Glendinning, B.A., A.F.R.Ae.S., for their Paper on the risk of fire and methods of its prevention. The Hon. Sir Ralph Cochrane, K.B.E., C.B., A.F.C., has won the Edward Bask Memorial Prize for his Paper on "The Development of Air Transport During the War," and W. M. Widgery, F.R.Ae.S., the R.38 Memorial Prize for his Paper, "Pressurization of Aircraft." The Branch Prize has been awarded to A. N. Clifton, F.R.Ae.S., and J. A. Kirk, for Papers read before the Southampton and Belfast branches respectively.

## DEATH OF COL. FRANK SEARLE

TO the younger generation in aviation the name Frank Searle will be almost unknown, but those who recall the early beginnings of civil aviation after the first world war will remember him well, first with the old Aircraft Transport and Travel (A.T. and T.) and later with Daimler Hire. When the four existing operating companies, Daimler Airways, Handley Page, Instone Air Line, and British Marine Air Navigation Co., were amalgamated into Imperial Airways, Col. Frank Searle became the first managing director. He was later succeeded by Mr. Woods-Humphrey.

Col. Frank Searle, C.B.E., D.S.O., died last week at his home in Bournemouth and was cremated last Thursday. When the second world war broke out, he came out of his retirement to take up a post with the British Power Boat Company at Hythe and Poole, and as deputy chairman and managing director he brought unbounded energy into the production of motor torpedo boats, gun boats and high-speed rescue vessels.

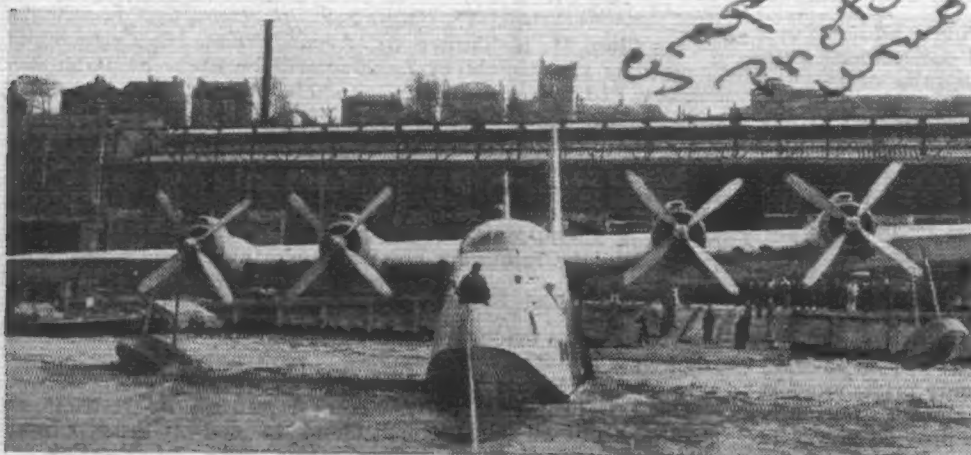
## ULTRA LIGHT PROGRESS

AT the second Annual General Meeting of the Ultra Light Aircraft Association, held at Londonderry House, on April 10th, interesting news of current developments was given.

G/C. E. L. Mole, chairman of the design sub-committee, said that construction of a new British design, the Herald, was well under way by Hants and Sussex Aviation, Ltd. The Herald is a low-wing cabin single-seater of 800 lb a.u.w. and 29ft span. It will have a 40 h.p. J.A.P. engine and the intention is that kits of parts will be made available for group construction by U.L.A.A. members.

G/C. Mole said that the position with regard to engines had considerably improved. The Association had, through the Kemsley Trust Fund, been able to buy a batch of J.A.P. engines. The two main types of engine the Association would need in the future were one of between 40 and 50 h.p., and another of between 25 and 30 h.p. for motor gliders.

The Association considered that a modified Certificate of Airworthiness would be beneficial and a draft of such a Certificate had been prepared by the A.R.B.



LAST FROM ROCHESTER: The Solent "Southsea," last of the Short flying boats to be built at the famous Rochester works, where Short Bros., Ltd. (now Short Bros. and Harland, Ltd.), have been established since 1915, was launched on April 8th. She is seen after the launching ceremony.